UDC CONSORTIUM

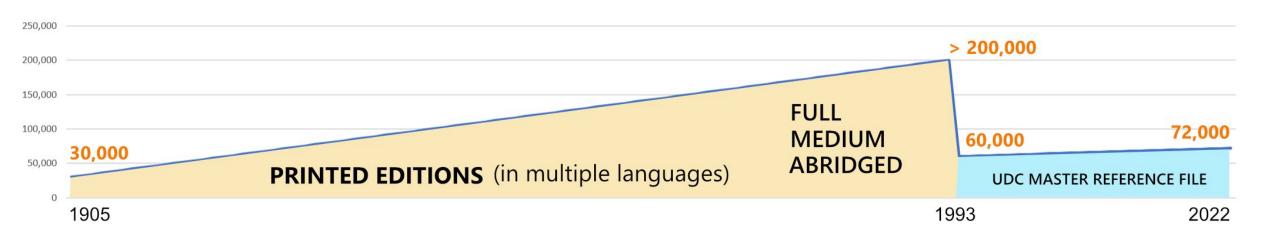# CLASSIFICATION CHANGE OVER TIME
a century of language classification in UDC
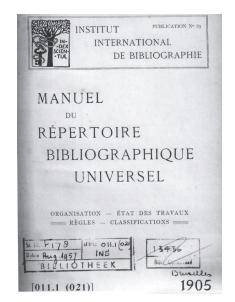
Aida Slavic
UDC Editor–in–Chief
UDC Consortium

Panel: Comparative Classification, 6 October 2022

UDC
M

250,000
200,000
150,000
100,000
50,000
0

> 200,000
72,000
30,000
60,000

FULL
MEDIUM
ABRIDGED

PRINTED EDITIONS (in multiple languages)

UDC MASTER REFERENCE FILE

1905
1993
2022

INSTITUT
INTERNATIONAL
DE BIBLIOGRAPHIE
PUBLICATION Nº 63

MANUEL
DU
RÉPERTOIRE
BIBLIOGRAPHIQUE
UNIVERSEL

ORGANISATION — ÉTAT DES TRAVAUX
RÈGLES — CLASSIFICATIONS

1905

- 21 MRF database releases
- 40% of the UDC revised
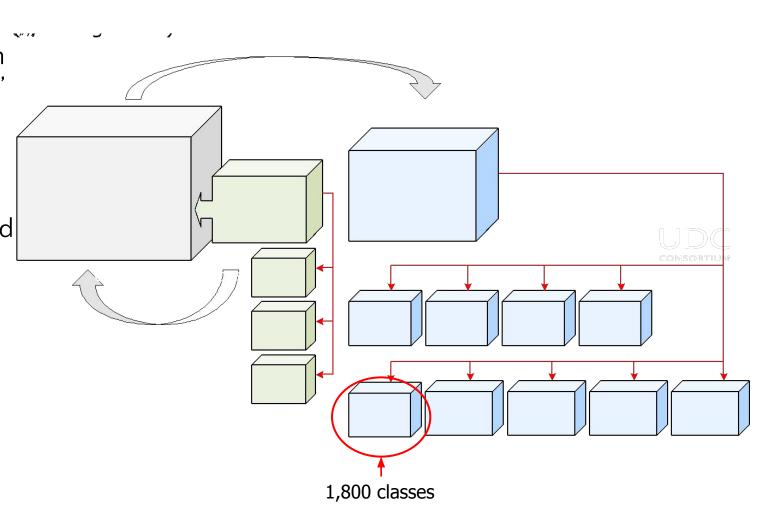
- general bibliographic classifications are complex knowledge organization systems –'a collection of 'hierarchies' organized into broader facets within knowledge domains;
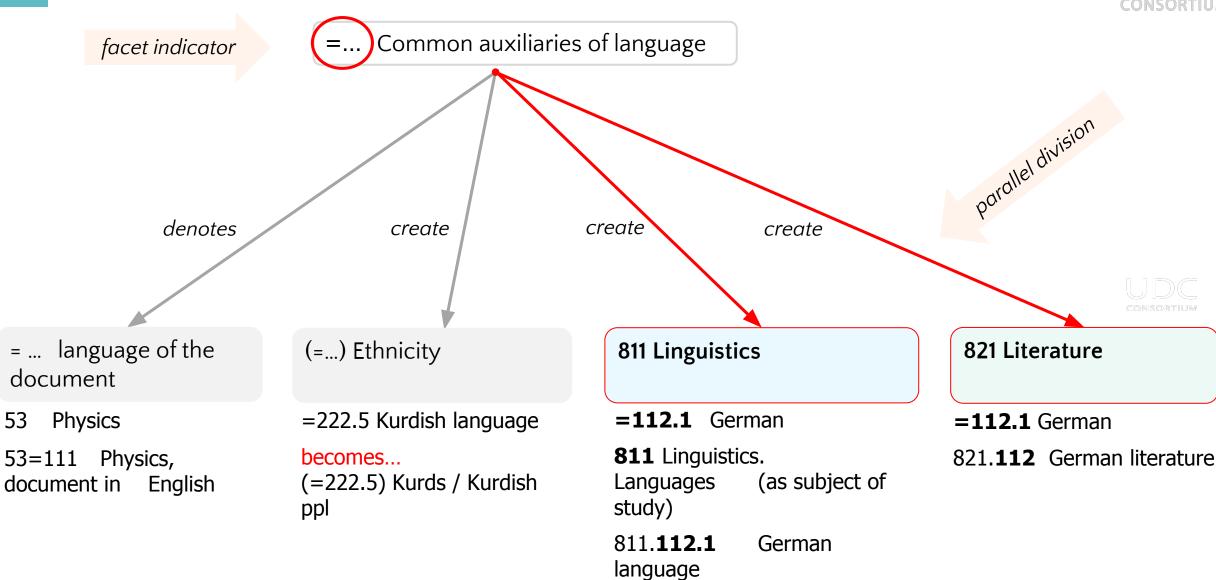
- concepts and classes are represented with a **notation** ('terms'); notations can be combined to form **complex strings** ('sentences')

- designed as indexing languages: vocabulary + syntax rules

1,800 classes

LANGUAGE FACET: MULTIPLE FUNCTION

facet indicator → (=...) Common auxiliaries of language

parallel division

denotes

= ... language of the document

53 Physics

53=111 Physics, document in English

create

(=...) Ethnicity

=222.5 Kurdish language

becomes...
(=222.5) Kurds / Kurdish ppl

create

811 Linguistics

=112.1 German

811 Linguistics. Languages (as subject of study)

811.**112.1** German language

create

821 Literature

=112.1 German

821.**112** German literature

- **Shorter schedules in analytico–synthetic systems**: classification of languages appears only once: in the table of languages (common subdivisions);

- **Significance of changes in language table –** affect other major areas of classification;

- **Impact of changes**: Library collections (public & school libraries) have a large proportion of collections in class 8 Linguistics. Literature (esp. literature, fiction); causing …

- **Deferral and avoidance of significant structural changes** – in the history of UDC there are only a few major restructurings of language tables.

UDC LANGUAGE FACET IN 1905 – BASED ON DEWEY

=2 English
=29   Anglo-Saxon
=3 German
=39 Germanic languages other than German
=39.1 Low German
=39.2 Frisian. Old Saxon
=39.3 Dutch. Flemish
=39.4 Plattdeutsch
=39.5 Scandinavian in general
=39.6 Old Norse. Islandic
=39.7 Swedish
=39.8 Danish. Norwegian
=39.9 Gothic
=4 French
=40   Provençal
=5 Italian
=59   Walachian
=59.9   Romanian
=6 Spanish
=69   Portuguese
=7 Latin
=8 Greek

=9 Other languages
=91 Other Indo-European languages
=91.1 Indian languages
=91.5 Iranian languages
=91.6 Celtic languages
=91.7 Russian
=91.8 Slavonic languages other than Russian
=92 Semitic languages (Syriac, Hebrew, Arabic)
=93 Hamitic languages (Egyptian, Old Coptic)
=94 Turanian languages, Uro-Altaic (Finnish, Turkish, Hungarian)
=95 Asian languages. Chinese
=96 African languages
=97 North American languages
=98 South American languages
=99 Malayo-Polynesian languages

1896-1920

=2	English
=3	Germanic languages
=4	French
=5	Italian
=6	Spanish
=7	Latin
=8	**Greek**
=9	**Other languages**
=91	**Other Indo-European languages**
=91.7	**Russian**
=91.8	**Slavonic languages other than Russian**
=92	Semitic languages
=93	Hamitic languages
=94	Turanian languages, Uro-Altaic
=95	Asian languages. Chinese
=96	African languages
=97	North American languages
=98	South American languages
=99	Malayo-Polynesian languages

1930-1960

=2	English
=3	Germanic languages
=40	French
=5	Italian. Romanian. Ladin
=6	Spanish. Portuguese. Galician
=7	**Classical languages. Latin. Greek**
=8	**Slavonic languages**
=9	**Oriental and other languages**
=91	**Indo-Germanic lang. Hindu. Persian. Celtic**
=92	Semitic languages
=93	Hamitic languages
=94	Turanian languages
=95	Asiatic languages. Chinese. **Japanese**
=96	African languages
=97	North **and Central** American lang.
=98	South American languages
=99	Malayo-Polynesian languages

1960-1989

=2	**Western languages.** English
=3	Germanic languages
=4	Romance languages
=5	Italian. Romanian. Ladin
=6	Iberian Romance languages
=7	Classical languages. Latin. Greek
=8	Slavonic **and Baltic languages**
=9	Oriental, **African** and **other languages**
=91	**Indo-European and other languages**
=92	Semitic languages
=93	Hamitic languages
=94/=99	**Isolating and agglutinative lang.**
=941/=945	**Ural-Altaic (Turanian) lang.**
=95	Asiatic languages (other than foregoing)
=96	African languages
=97	North and Central **Amerindian** lang.
=98	South **Amerindian** languages
=99	**Austronesian and Australian lang.**

THE MAIN RESTRUCTURING 1990

1960-1989

=2   Western languages. English
=3   Germanic languages
=4   Romance languages
=5   Italian. Romanian. Ladin
=6   Iberian Romance languages
=7   Classical languages. Latin. Greek
=8   Slavonic and Baltic languages
=9   Oriental, African and other lang.
=91   Indo-European and other lang.
=92   Semitic languages
=93   Hamitic languages
=94/=99   Isolating and agglutinative lang.
=941/=945 Ural-Altaic (Turanian) lang.
=95   Asiatic languages
=96   African languages
=97   North and Central Amerindian lang.
=98   South Amerindian languages
=99   Austronesian and Australian lang.

1990

=1/=9 Languages (natural and artificial)
=1/=8 Natural languages

=1/=2 Indo-European languages
=21/=22   Indo-Iranian languages

=3   Dead languages of unknown affiliation. Caucasian languages

=4   Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) lang. Nilo-Saharan lang. Congo- Kordofanian lang. Khoisan lang.

=5   Ural-Altaic lang. Japanese. Korean. Ainu. Paleo-Siberian lang. Dravidian   lang. Sino-Tibetan lang.

=6   Austro-Asiatic languages. Austronesian languages

=7   Indo-Pacific (non-Austronesian) languages. Australian languages
=8   American Indian (Amerindian) lang.
=9   Artificial languages

- Complete restructuring of classification based genealogical principle (diachronic relatedness of languages) – linguistics literature sources available in the 1980s

- logical grouping, removal of western bias

- Increased number of languages, deeper hierarchy

CHANGES CONTINUE

UDC CONSORTIUM

1990

=1/=9 Languages (natural and artificial)
=1/=8 Natural languages

=1/=2 Indo-European languages
=21/=22 Indo-Iranian languages

=3 Dead languages of unknown affiliation. Caucasian languages

=4 Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) lang. Nilo-Saharan lang. Congo- Kordofanian lang. Khoisan lang.

=5 Ural-Altaic lang. Japanese. Korean. Ainu. Paleo-Siberian lang. Dravidian lang. Sino-Tibetan lang.

=6 Austro-Asiatic languages. Austronesian languages

=7 Indo-Pacific (non-Austronesian) languages. Australian languages

=8 American Indian (Amerindian) lang.

=9 Artificial languages

2008-2019

=1/=9 Languages (natural and artificial)
=1/=8 Natural languages

=1/=2 Indo-European languages
=1 Indo-European lang. of Europe
=2 Indo-Iranian, Nuristani and dead Indo-European lang.
=3 Dead lang. of unknown affiliation. Caucasian languages

=4 Afro-Asiatic, Nilo-Saharan, Niger-Congo, Khoisan languages

=5 Ural-Altaic, Palaeo-Siberian, Eskimo-Aleut, Dravidian and Sino-Tibetan languages. Japanese. Korean

=6 Austro-Asiatic languages. Austronesian languages

=7 Indo-Pacific (non-Austronesian) languages. Australian languages
=8 American indigenous languages
=9 Artificial languages

- Linguistics sources – 1990 onwards – more research in the genealogy of indigenous languages, better access and better linguistic tools and methods;

- UDC – adds missing hierarchy levels;

- Improves naming, spelling, advantage given to vernacular languages;

- revised American indigenous languages, African languages.

MOVING FROM ONE NOTATION TO ANOTHER

2008

=873	x [0812] Andean-Equatorial languages ==> =85 Andean languages. Eq...
=873.1	x [0812] Andean languages ==> =852 Andean languages
=873.11	x [0812] Cahuapanan ==> =855.51 Cahuapanan languages

2009

=811.29	x [0912] Other Athapaskan languages ==> =811 Na-Dené. Haida

2012

=416.23	x [1212] Majoid group ==> =416.3 Mao languages

- Most disruptive – reusing the same notation in a different meaning

- Less disruptive – moving structure to another free notation

- Least disruptive – leaving the general language group on the same notation, changing the scope (broadening/narrowing) of the existing classes and adding further subdivisions

CHANGES IN CLASS DESCRIPTION

=811.15   Dene group of Athabaskan languages ■ Dogrib / Hare / Tlicho, Chipewyan, Yellowknives / T'atsaot'ine, Slavey / Deh Cho and Sahtu / Sahtú tine languages ⌃

Information Note: Some authors include Sari in this group

=45   Khoisan languages (scientifically obsolete) ⌃

Scope Note: Use this class for the convenience of grouping only. The term "Khoisan Languages" was previously used to group a set of languages that are not genealogically related

=453   Khoe / Central Khoisan languages ⌃

Information Note: Khoe languages were formerly known as Hottentot, now considered a pejorative, discouraged term

=426.71   Meroitic ⌃

Information Note: The classification of this extinct language is uncertain due to lack of data

LOGICAL HIERARCHY REQUIRES LONGER NOTATIONS

1905

=2	English
=29	Anglo-Saxon
=3	German
=39	Germanic languages other than German
=39.1	Low German
=39.2	Frisian. Old Saxon
=39.3	Dutch. Flemish
=39.4	Plattdeutsch
=39.5	Scandiniavian in general
=39.6	Old Norse. Islandic
=39.7	Swedish
=39.8	Danish. Norwegian
=39.9	Gothic
=4	French
=40	Provençal
=5	Italian
=59	Walachian
=59.9	Romanian
=6	Spanish
=69	Portuguese
=7	Latin
=8	Greek

1990

=1/=2	=1/=2	Indo-European languages
=11 Germ	=11	Germanic languages
=12 Italic	=111	English
=13 Rom	=112	German
=14 Gree	=12	Italic languages
=15 Celtic	=124	Latin
=16 Slavo	=13	Romance languages
=17 Baltic	=131.1	Italian
=18 Alba	=133.1	French
=19 Arme	=134.2	Spanish
	=14	Greek
	=15	Celtic languages.
	=16	Slavonic languages
	=17	Baltic languages
	=18	Albanian
	=19	Armenian

UDC CONSORTIUM

2009 last revision

1905–1930

=97 North and Central Amerindian lang.

[No subdivision]

1930–1980

=97 North and Central American lang.
=971.1 Kenai group
=971.2 Na–Dene group
=971.3 Algonkian–Mosan group
[No mention of Salish specifically]

Mosan = a hypothetical language family comprising Salishan, Wakashan and Chimakuan (proposed by E. Sapir in 1929)

1990–2007

=81/=82 North American Indian (North Amerindian) lang.
=821 Penutian
=823 Oto-Manguean lang.
=824 Salish languages
=824.1 Kalispel
=824.2 Lillooet
=824.3 Nikutamuk
=824.4 Okanogan
=824.5 Shuswap
=824.9 Other Salish lang.

=82 Indigenous languages of western North American Coast, Mexico and Yucatan
  North American indigenous language families: Penutian, Kiowa–Tanoan, Salish, Wakashan and Chimakuan
=824 Salish languages
=824.1/.5 **Interior Salish Languages**
  Coeur d'Alene, Sinkiuse-Columbian and Spokane-Kalispel–Flathead
=824.1 Spokane–Kalispel–Flathead
=824.2 Lillooet
=824.3 **Thompson River Salish languages**
  Nlaka'pamux and Scw'exmx
=824.4 Okanogan / Okanagan
=824.5 Shuswap
=824.6 **Nuxalk / Bella Coola / Bilchula**
=824.7 **Coast Salish**
  Comox, Lushootseed / Puget Salish, Nooksack, Pentlatch, Klallam, Twana, Tillamook and Tsamosan languages (Cowlitz, Chehalis and Quinault)
=824.71 Halkomelen
=824.72 Shashishalh / Sechelt
=824.73 Squamish
=824.74 Northern Straits / Saanich

IN SUMMARY...

- Structural changes: moving concepts and classes from one notation to another is extremely disruptive, the broader the class, the greater the problems it creates in the collections;

- Changes in the top level of classification are rather rare (once every 20–50 years);

- Logical structures require deeper hierarchies and longer notation – users dislike long notation;

- Libraries very rarely and reluctantly update classification in use and can continue using classes 50 years after these are cancelled in the schedules;

THANK YOU